

Healthy Homes Healthy Communities



What you should know
about occupancy limits.



www.fairfaxcounty.gov

In Fairfax County, as well as in other communities across the nation, laws are passed to protect the health, safety and welfare of residents. Housing, building and zoning codes limit the number of people who may live in a home, apartment, townhouse or condominium. The purpose of this brochure is to help you better understand some of the basic occupancy requirements as set forth in the **Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC)** and the **Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance**. For detailed information about the laws governing the occupancy of a residence, call the Fairfax County Health Department at 703-246-2300 or the Department of Planning and Zoning at 703-324-1314.

Health and Building Code Standards

In an effort to ensure a safe and healthy living environment and to help minimize the spread of disease, national housing standards or codes have been developed. One of the code provisions, designed to protect public health and safety, places limits on the number of people who may live in a home/dwelling. Properties in the state of Virginia are governed by the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code. The VUSBC space requirements shown below limit the number of people who can occupy a dwelling.

Standards:

- ◆ A bedroom or sleeping area regularly occupied by one person must have at least 70 square feet of space.
- ◆ When two or more people regularly occupy a bedroom or sleeping area, 50 square feet of space must be provided for each person. Space Requirements per bedroom or sleeping area:
 - 70 square feet of space for 1 person
 - 100 square feet of space for 2 people
 - 150 square feet of space for 3 people.

In addition to the space requirement, the room(s) used for sleeping must provide privacy, adequate light and ventilation, and two means of exit, one of which must lead directly to the outside.

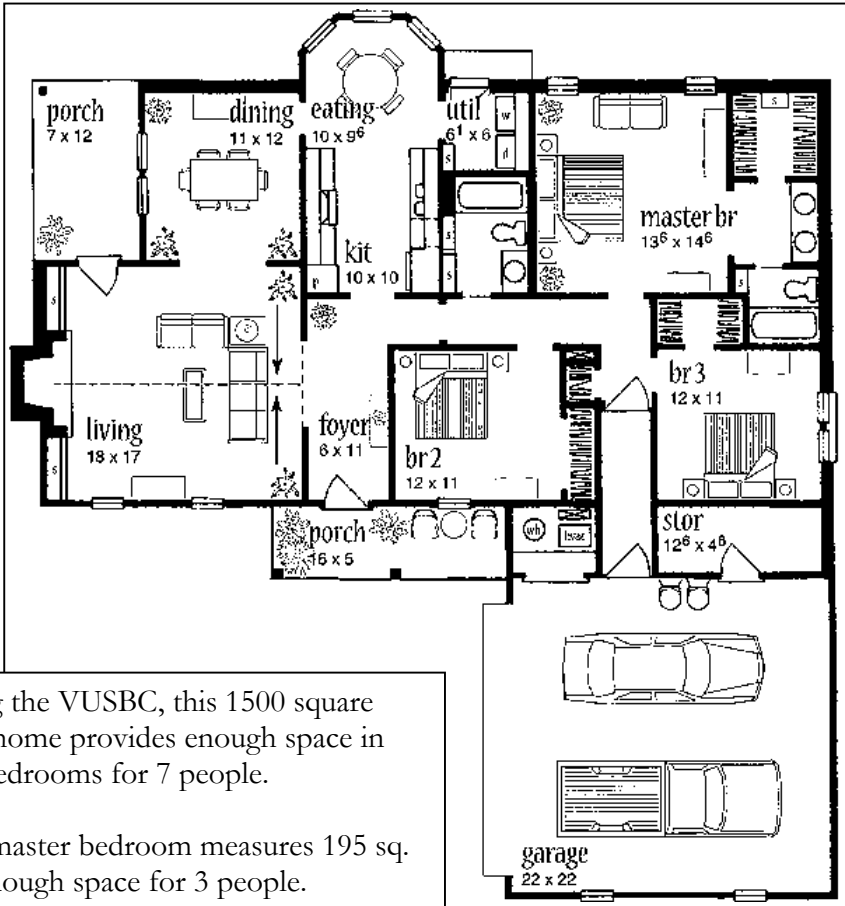
**Community Health & Safety
Fairfax County Health Department
703-246-2300 “TTY 711”**

County Zoning Ordinance Provisions

In Fairfax County, occupancy limits for a dwelling can be found in the Zoning Ordinance. Shown below are some of the most common Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance provisions relating to the occupancy of a residence. The Zoning Ordinance, Section 2-502, permits, among other things, a dwelling to be occupied by:

- ◆ One family, which may consist of one person or two or more persons related by blood or marriage with any number of natural children, foster children, step children or adopted children. In addition, there may be up to two roomers or boarders.
- ◆ Two single parents or guardians with not more than a total of six of their dependent children, including natural children, foster children, step children or adopted children, functioning as a single housekeeping unit.
- ◆ A group of not more than four persons not necessarily related by blood or marriage living as a single housekeeping unit

**Zoning Enforcement Branch
Department of Planning and Zoning
703-324-1300 “TTY 711”**



Using the VUSBC, this 1500 square foot home provides enough space in the bedrooms for 7 people.

The master bedroom measures 195 sq. ft., enough space for 3 people.

Bedroom 2 is 132 sq. ft., and bedroom 3 is 132 sq. ft. These bedrooms have enough space for 2 people in each bedroom.

Each bedroom has 2 means of exit.

This document is available in an alternative format upon request.

Please call the Office of Public Affairs at

703-324-3187, TTY 703-324-2935.

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